

### CHAPTER III

No elephants and no lions—Heavy going and a welcome lift—A swampy region—Shambe—Bahr el Ghazal Province—Its history—Rumbek—Giant elands—The Eastern Jur, their religion, customs and laws—Prairie fire—A dance before the camera—On board again.

SOME decades ago the banks of the Bahr el Zeraf were densely populated by Dinka. But these were literally exterminated by the perpetual attacks of the warlike Nuer. The Nuer, however, did not settle in the vacant territory because they feared the vengeance of the Northern Dinka. The land was left to animals. For a long time the English were powerless against the doings of the Nuer, who always retreated after a raid into their inaccessible swamps. When the Upper Nile Province was gradually opened up the Government could dare to proceed more severely. Before that, they had contented themselves with trying to restrain the Sheikhs of the larger places from plundering by means of remonstrances, but in vain. Then in 1914 a thorough punitive expedition was undertaken. The troops advanced from two sides, burnt many villages and took thousands of cattle. The captured warriors were drafted as recruits into the Sudanese Army, while the younger women had to clean the streets of the bigger places. Some years later the prisoners were all dismissed again to their homes and the Nuer remained peaceful for a long time. At the end of 1927 a terrible rising broke out, which began with the assassination of the English District Officer and took a year and a half to quell. The banks of the Bahr el Zeraf were little by little occupied once more by the Dinka and the paradise of animals is now a thing of the past.

At Fangak I learn little that is new. The presence of elephants is confirmed. I decide first of all to explore the surroundings of the village and see if there are not perhaps some small pools at which animals drink. I am on the look-out for such places because they offer a fair chance of filming game. We tow the car ashore again.

Some Dinkas belonging to the enclave soon arrive. They are also wearing Nuer costume and look very picturesque. They are prepared to show us the drinking-places of the game. As it is too late in the day to go stalking in the car, I order the guides for the next morning. Meanwhile the people come to the boat and sit down on their curious shields and clubs to watch the funny Europeans at work. Several young men are among them. As they have reached manhood their four lower incisors have been knocked out—a custom that is common to practically all Nilotic negro tribes. I have mentioned before that the Dinka here dye their hair red. One young man is in the middle of the treatment; he is still carrying the caked paste on his head. This paste is kneaded out of cow-dung, ashes, earth and cow's urine. It is smeared over the man's head, where it remains for about ten days, being frequently wetted again with urine. The hard mass is then broken off, the hair is carefully dusted and thoroughly greased with fat, usually mutton fat. With this coiffure a man seems to have an irresistible effect on women.

The next morning brings a surprise. The three natives who had promised to guide us do not appear, and when I send to look for them it turns out that they have fled to the other bank. No one knows why. But other men are promised us at the police station. We are told that a fortnight ago an English inspector tried unsuccessfully to hunt elephants from here, although it is well known that splendid bulls are to be found standing by the heglig trees. This year an unusual quantity of water has remained in the swamps so that they are drinking quite irregularly at one or other of the *fullas* instead of being compelled to come to the Bahr el Zeraf as in

other years. In any case they would have left the drinking-places long before sunrise. These circumstances render a hunt extraordinarily difficult, because it is a matter of luck if the hunter finds fresh footprints at a pool. If he does, he then has to follow them up till he finds the elephants, and that may be a matter of days. The weather is also against us. Whereas the sky here does not as a rule become overcast before the end of March, it has already clouded over these last few days and this morning it even began to rain. When I tell the N.C.O. at the police station that we intend to come back and hunt in about four weeks' time, after the water has fallen, he points at the sky and remarks calmly, "Do you see those clouds? In four weeks' time we shall—Inshallah—have more water than now!" To my question whether it is possible to reach by car the places where elephants resort, he replies, "It can't be done from here because a khor full of water lies between. They are not to be reached from the other side either because there are trees in the way." When I object that one could avoid the trees, he says, "Yes, you are quite right." It seems evident that he has never seen a car and has no conception of what such a vehicle can do.

All this is not very informative. However, I decide to have a shot at it. I had already heard a lot about the great speed of the negroes. I am now convinced that the statements are no exaggeration. These men, standing 6 feet 6 inches and over, with enormous long legs, have an average stride of more than a yard (Fig. 22). On the parched and cracked soil of the steppe these giants swing along at a speed of nearly five miles an hour. Only because I am in good training can I keep up with them, and then it is a considerable strain. The weather is unbearably sultry and the sun burns down on the high grass. After a run of two and a half hours we arrive at the *fulla* where the game are said to water. The whole region is marshy and the banks are overgrown. The animals have every opportunity of drinking in the middle of the swamp grass. There is no

hope of photographing. Near by stands an unused *murrah* or cattle pen. A Dinka who has stayed behind as guard tells us that two elephants were here yesterday. Their tracks deeply trodden into the soft mud confirm his statement. There are no lions about, he says. This also agrees with what my guides have told me. In these circumstances I give up following the elephants. If we succeed in going up the Bahr el Zeraf to its source in the sailing-boat, we ought to find better places. If we fail and have to turn back, we can always try to hunt elephants here. So we return with all speed to the landing-place. On the way we pass some *tukul*. It is already dark and the people have made everything ready for the night. Not far from the huts a fire is lighted. Near it the natives have buried themselves up to the neck in ashes. Only their heads are visible. In this very practical way the Nilotic negroes protect themselves against the mosquitoes. In the morning one meets them powdered white, as the wood ash sticks to the whole body, and the eyes, which alone have remained free from ash, appear doubly large in their black cavities.

A police officer is waiting for me on the bank. My men have told him that I go bathing in the river every evening and he has come expressly to warn me against doing so. He says that a man-eater is indulging his appetite hereabouts and eight natives have recently fallen his victims. The people at the station are so frightened that nobody dares to draw water from the river in the evening. I do without my bathe this time. As it is oppressively muggy even after sunset I remain sitting on the bank longer than usual. The night is dark, the moon rises late. The Southern Cross stands aslant in the sky, the Pole Star is low down on the horizon. Suddenly I hear a loud splash and vaguely in the darkness I make out a large object nearing the bank. From time to time it disappears but always rises again. It seems to be really an enormous crocodile waiting here for prey.

Sailing further we come to a bend in the river where the

boat has once more to be towed. A broad belt of *um suf* (mother of wool) hinders our landing. We have to try to make the shore in a more primitive manner. The felucca (small boat) goes fifty yards ahead and is tied up to the rushes. With united strength the crew now haul the sailing-boat up to this point. The felucca goes on another fifty yards and the hauling is repeated. Again and again we do it till we have mastered the swampy patch. In this way we advance a mere two hundred yards in an hour. All at once a steamer is announced. It approaches rapidly and turns out to be a hunting expedition of Baron Louis Rothschild on its way up the Bahr el Zeraf towards Mongalla. When it comes alongside of us, the steamer stops and the Baron kindly offers to tow us for a time. I am only too happy to accept. I shall hunt along the river on our way back and try first to photograph the natives at Shambe, especially the Southern Dinka.

These Dinka are a peculiar case. Their origin is unknown. At some time or other they immigrated from the south-west. But while the Shilluk, for example, advanced in close formation, the much more numerous Dinka split up. In all probability they moved at first towards the north-east till the immense swamps of the southern region stopped their advance. One division now went east and settled along the swamp where they lived in uninterrupted feud with the Nuer. These are the tribes who to-day still inhabit the region from the southern edge of the swamp to the Sobat and, north of that river, the White Nile as far as Renk. The main stream turned westwards and put up their dwellings on the west brink of the swamp, over the Bahr el Ghazal and into Southern Kordofan. Here again the Nuer set a limit to the Dinka's advance. In course of time other peoples followed and many portions lost all connection with the parent tribe. Such isolated tribes developed differently in language, habits and costume, so that the population to-day offers the photographer a rare variety of material. Whereas the Shilluk are hunters and fishermen by preference and take to cattle-

breeding more incidentally, the Dinka are primarily cattle-breeders and farmers. They have prospered by it. Not indeed as wealthy as the Nuer, whose bride-price for a wife runs as high as forty head of cattle, they are yet decidedly richer than, for example, the Shilluk, among whom women are to be had for ten. A Dinka youth when he wants to marry must spend from twenty to thirty head of cattle. When one considers that these people have excellent opportunities of selling their beasts (a bull costs about £6 sterling and a cow considerably more), and that some of them own many hundreds, it is obvious that they are much better off than our peasants. Besides that, they produce all their necessities and are thus absolutely independent of merchants. One never meets a beggar. They are a people who do not know what social misery means. The English let them go on as they have been accustomed to do for thousands of years and so they have been spared the "blessings" of civilisation. Happy people!

The following morning we sail into the Bahr el Jebel, the upper river. In the last third of the Bahr el Zeraf the vegetation had changed. We are now getting near the centre of the swampy region. The papyrus is higher and thicker and is rarely interrupted by the various kinds of dark-coloured reeds and elephant grass. At first sight the vegetation strikes one as monotonous, but this impression vanishes with closer observation. One seems to have been transported to a fairy-land. The tall papyrus with its delicate long leaves forms the background of the pictures that spread out before me. The white, blue and yellow flowers of small water-lilies and floating plants cover the surface, with the fine, fragile, bizarre shapes of various swamp grasses in striking contrast. A moor-hen runs noiselessly over the leaves of the lilies. Swaying on its long, delicate pink feet, it searches the plants for insects. Its white breast and russet brown plumage harmonise charmingly with these surroundings. All this splendour is crammed into a space of some two square

yards! The tourists who sail up the Nile by steamer have usually not the slightest notion of this fairy world. The time spent amongst the monotonous papyrus does not pass quickly enough for them.

Next morning we wake near Shambe. I drive to the District Commissioner. I have resigned myself to seeing no game from the car and meet with a most agreeable surprise. Ostriches (Fig. 26), giraffes and gazelles are not in the least disturbed by us and we pass within a hundred steps of them. By a happy chance the District Commissioner, Captain K., is there and I spend a whole day in the company of this kind and hospitable man. I also have an opportunity of visiting his official seat at Yirrol. He has made things very comfortable there and entertains me most lavishly.

The Bahr el Ghazal Province of the Sudan is undoubtedly one of the most interesting parts of Africa. Not every mortal is allowed to visit it and I am very much tempted to explore it. All too many different peoples live here side by side and their perpetual quarrels and battles necessitate the intervention from time to time of English police troops. Peace then prevails again for some months. As there are tribes here who are masters in the use of poisoned arrows, the English Government is afraid of the unpleasantness that might result if what has happened to many an English inspector should also happen to a European hunter. Hardly another part of the Sudan has had such a checkered past as these southern provinces. About the middle of last century Ibrahim Pasha under Mohammed Ali conquered the north of the Sudan, which was preponderantly inhabited by Mohammedans. The south was slowly opened up by traders. Europeans did the pioneer work and Arab wholesale merchants followed. When the news of fabulous wealth in slaves and ivory spread to the north, wholesale merchants equipped armed expeditions and subdued the country. Fortified places, so-called *zeriba*, were put up everywhere and "administered" by the Vakil with the help of *besinger*

(negro soldiers). The wholesale merchants preyed unscrupulously on the country, forced the natives to hand over their large stocks of ivory, raided more distant parts, burnt down villages, stole women and children. In this way each trader " managed " a tract of land, without competition from other firms in his claim. If one wanted to visit the Sudan at that time one was obliged, as Schweinfurth was, to entrust oneself to the protection of one of these merchants. He would then make out a letter of safe-conduct to the Vakils and the explorer could visit the country in comparative safety. One thing the merchants were particularly careful about, and that was not to alienate the Nilotic negroes. On the contrary, they did all they could to keep on good terms with the powerful and warlike tribes of the Shilluk and Dinka, and even to-day one can see plainly that these negroes have never bowed to a yoke. Such ideal conditions for the merchants lasted up to the 'seventies. Then the fight in Europe against slavery began and Egypt was forced to prohibit these activities by law. But even then things were rosy for the wholesale traders. Governors were bribed and the traffic in slaves and ivory flourished as before. The small dealers, however, who were not in a position to bribe and whose existence was threatened, pestered the Government until at last Egypt decided to take over the administration of these territories. An army under Sir Samuel Baker was equipped, which penetrated to the Upper Nile and founded the Province of Chat el Estiva, in the southernmost Sudan. Through Baker's successors, Gordon Pasha and Emin Pasha, the land became famous. Gradually Egypt occupied Bahr el Ghazal Province as well and compelled the merchants to disband their troops and discharge the *besinger*. In consequence of these measures discontent increased enormously and the *besinger* together with the small traders engineered a rising which Egypt, through Gessi Pasha, put down with great bloodshed. Some sort of peace reigned till the great Mahdist insurrection broke out. Southern Sudan joined the north in going over

to the fanatical dervishes. But these did not know what to do with the country. They contented themselves with occupying Rejaf and Bor, which they turned into slave-trading centres. As a place of banishment the region gained a certain notoriety. Whoever fell into disfavour with the Caliph (the Mahdi's successor) was banished here to live out his days as best he might in the unhealthy climate. Not till the 'nineties did this state of affairs change. Then from the south the Belgians advanced and snatched the greater part of the Bahr el Ghazal Province from the Mahdists; in the west the French attacked; and finally the English, coming from the north and from Uganda, conquered the rest of the country.

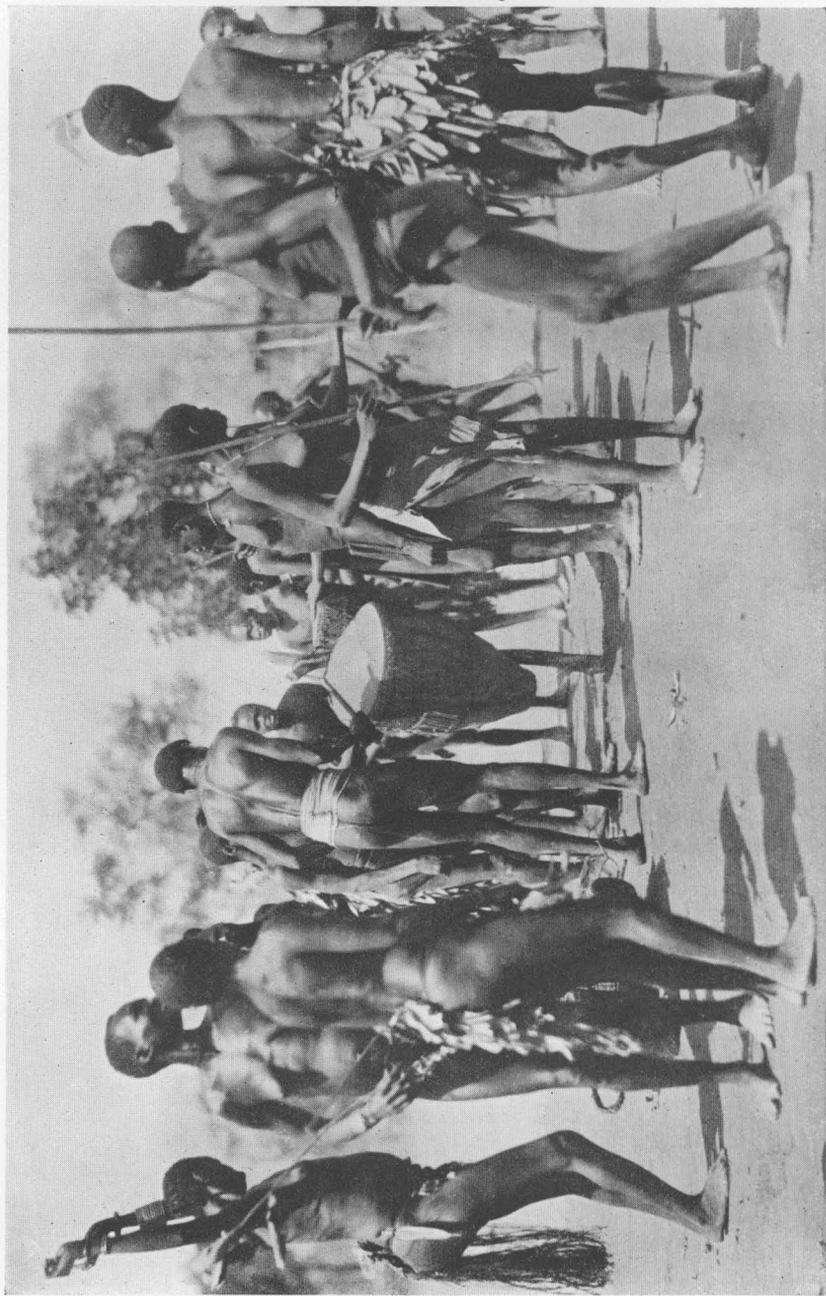
Nowadays it does not entice travellers. The climate is bad and feverish and there is very little game. Other reasons attract me. I am eager to preserve in pictures whatever has not yet been lost in this locked-up corner of the world. Already it is necessary to travel hundreds of miles inland to come across archers. The poisoning of arrows is forbidden by the Government, and without poison this weapon, despite its terrible head, is little more than a toy. Costumes and habits are dying out and nearly everywhere the Sheikhs strut about in European clothes, supplied by the Government. Mission stations are also zealously at work destroying the natives' characteristics. For me this land has another special attraction, in that it shelters two animals of which only very few specimens are left in Africa—the white rhinoceros and the giant eland. The former is under protection and the existence of relatively numerous examples of this combative animal leaves at the moment little fear of its dying out from degeneration, as in South Africa. The giant eland is less frequently found than the white rhinoceros and is slowly dying out in spite of all efforts to save it. Is it insight into the inevitable that has led the English to let it loose, although hitherto it has also been protected? In any case it is only granted to every mortal once in his life

to kill a giant eland and the inaccessibility of their abode is a better protection than any hunting laws.

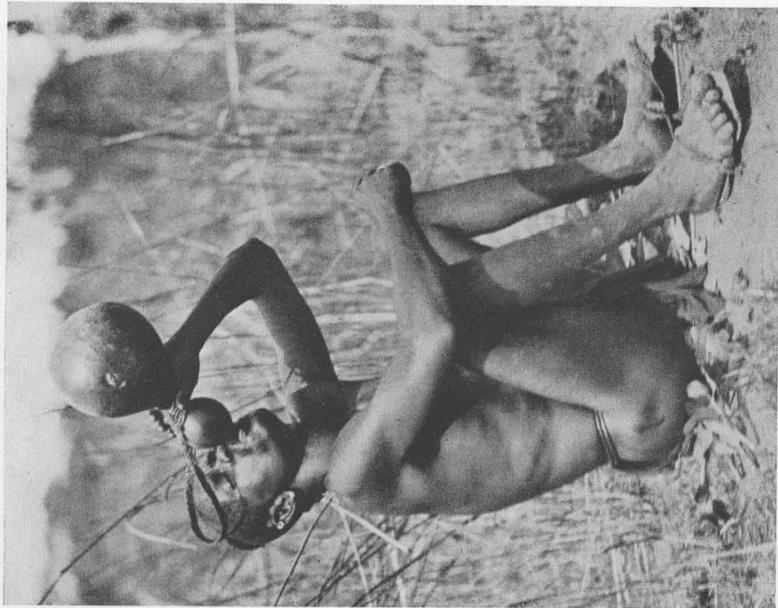
I get into the Ford with my gun and cameras. We have a great deal of trouble stowing these delicate things away in the car. I tie ropes across and hang the bags on them. They swing up and down and so their precious contents are spared any violent knocks. All that makes life in Africa agreeable has to be left behind—tent, table, chairs and many other things. Our provisions consist solely of *abri*, rice and a few tinned foods. I observe with apprehension how the springs of the chassis are weighed down. It looks doubtful whether the car can bear the load of over thirteen hundredweight of reserve petrol, oil, water, mosquito outfit for Machulka and myself, on top of the cooking apparatus. But a breakdown sixty or a hundred miles from Shambe, without food, water and game, would be no joke. The engine is cranked up and our hazardous journey starts. Shambe lies on a peninsula surrounded by swamps. A raised road of dry mud, as hard as stone, leads through the swampy region. It is uneven and we have only gone a couple of hundred yards when a suspicious sound makes us stop. The overloaded wooden body is scraping the tyres at every bump in the road and an iron support has already worn deep grooves in the rubber. We remove the iron, saw off a piece of wooden support and then proceed. The sawing has to be repeated and soon very little is left of the support. Then it goes all right at a pinch. The road is not bad and we advance at the rate of about ten miles an hour. We reach the first rest-house. I ask the guard if there is any game and learn that in the early morning a lion had squatted down in the middle of the road. A little further we come upon giraffes, tiang and an ostrich family. They let the car come quite close and gaze after it in surprise; none of them makes any move to run away. On we go without a stop as we must try to put a hundred miles behind us to-day. What in Europe would be a trifle is here a difficult enterprise. The road provides us with perpetual surprises.



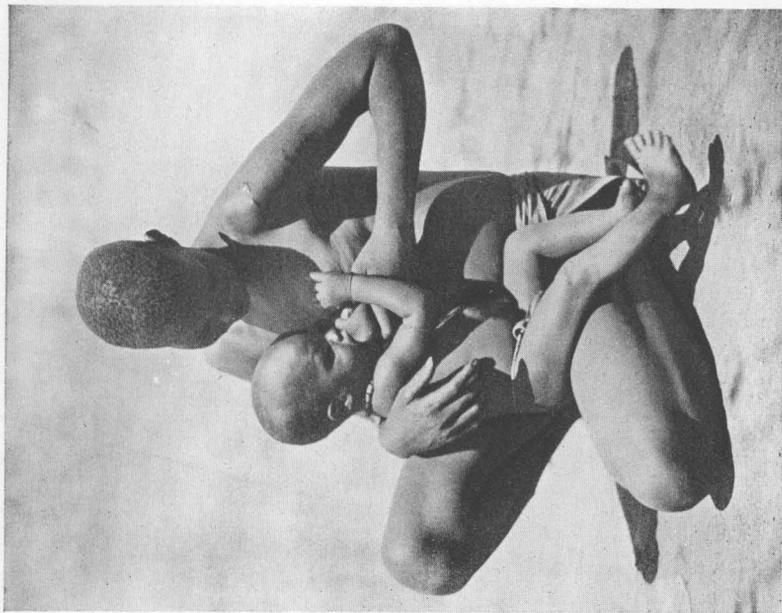
34. Individual dancing among the Eastern Jur.



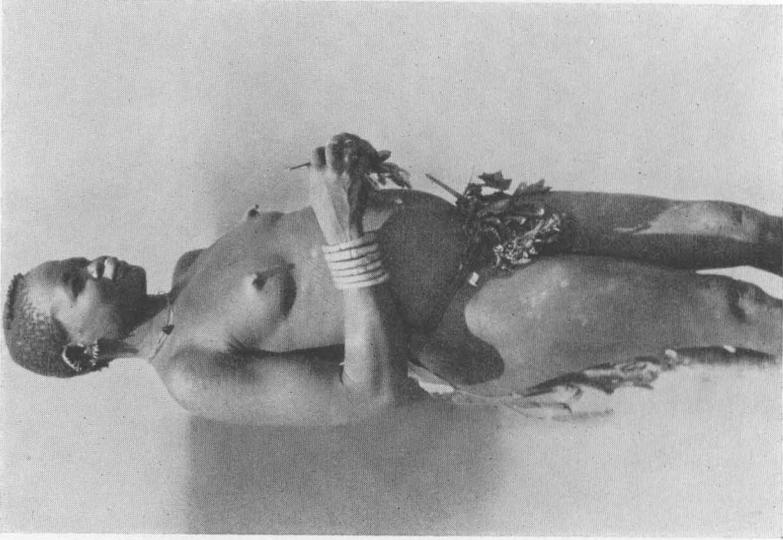
35. Dinka dances among the Eastern Jur to the music of drums and rattles.



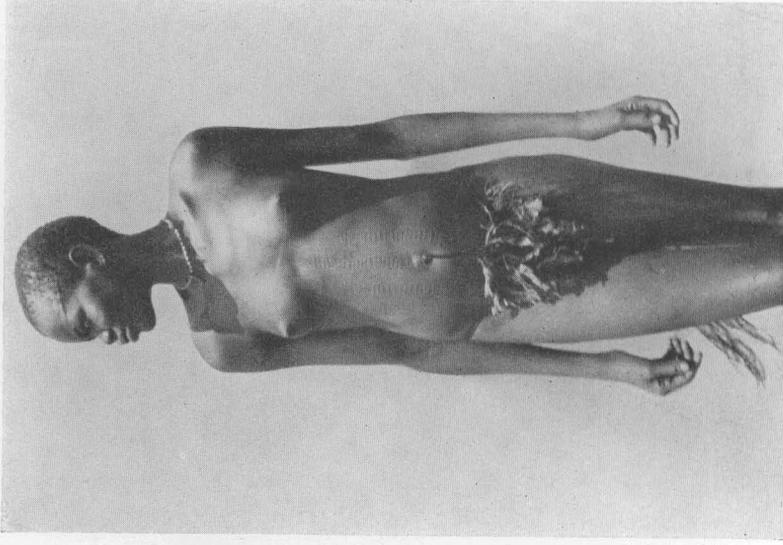
36. An Eastern Jur drinking water out of a gourd-bottle.



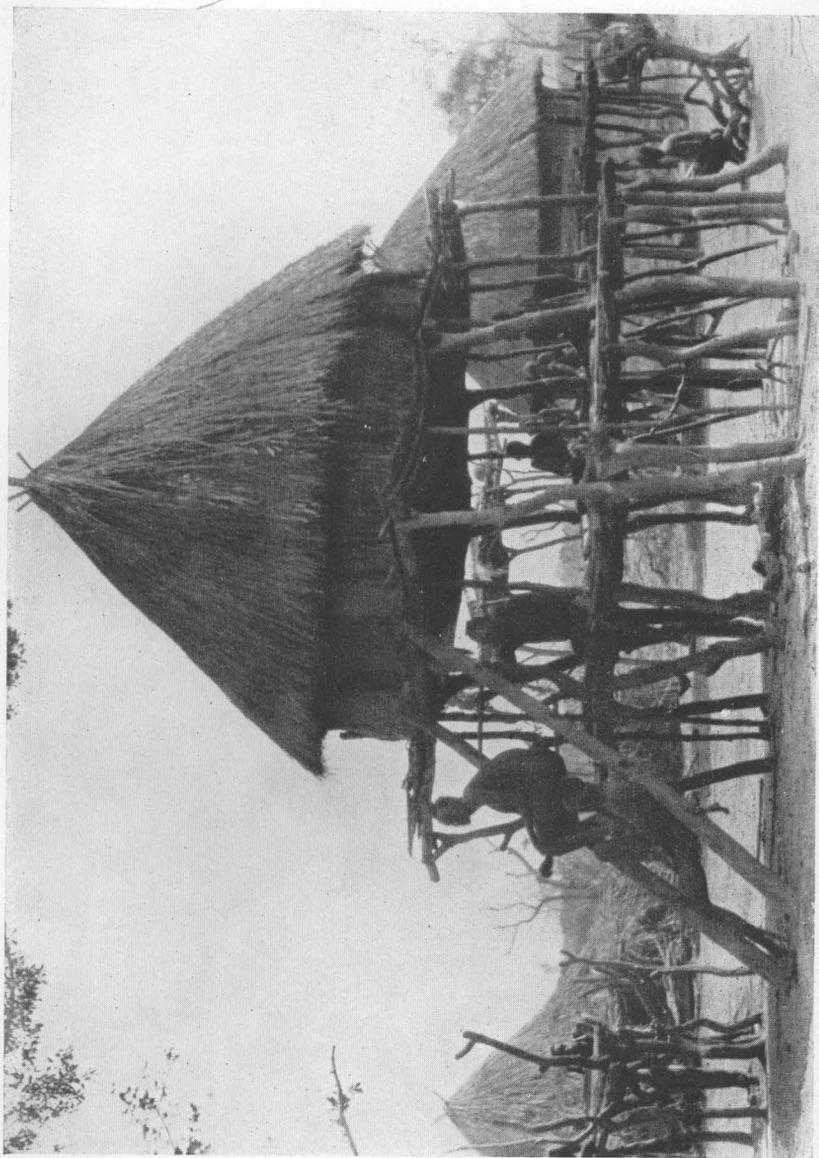
37. The wife of an Eastern Jur suckling her three-year-old child. The goatskin apron shows that she is a Dinka.



38. Typical Eastern Jur woman.



39. A Dinka among the Jur women.



40. Dwelling *tukul* of the Eastern Jur. By day the natives sit on the platform, at night they withdraw into the closed house.



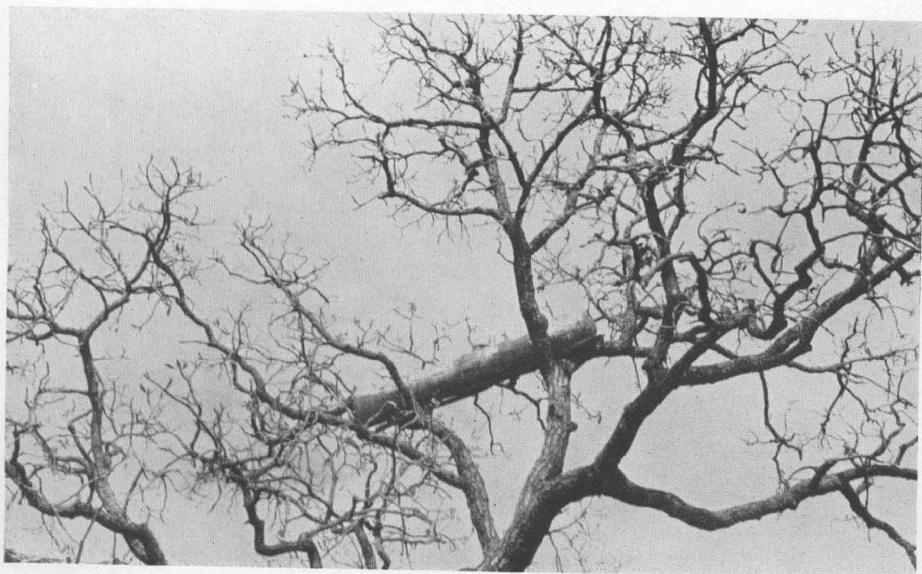
41. Gasmasid shaving the head of the captain of my ship.



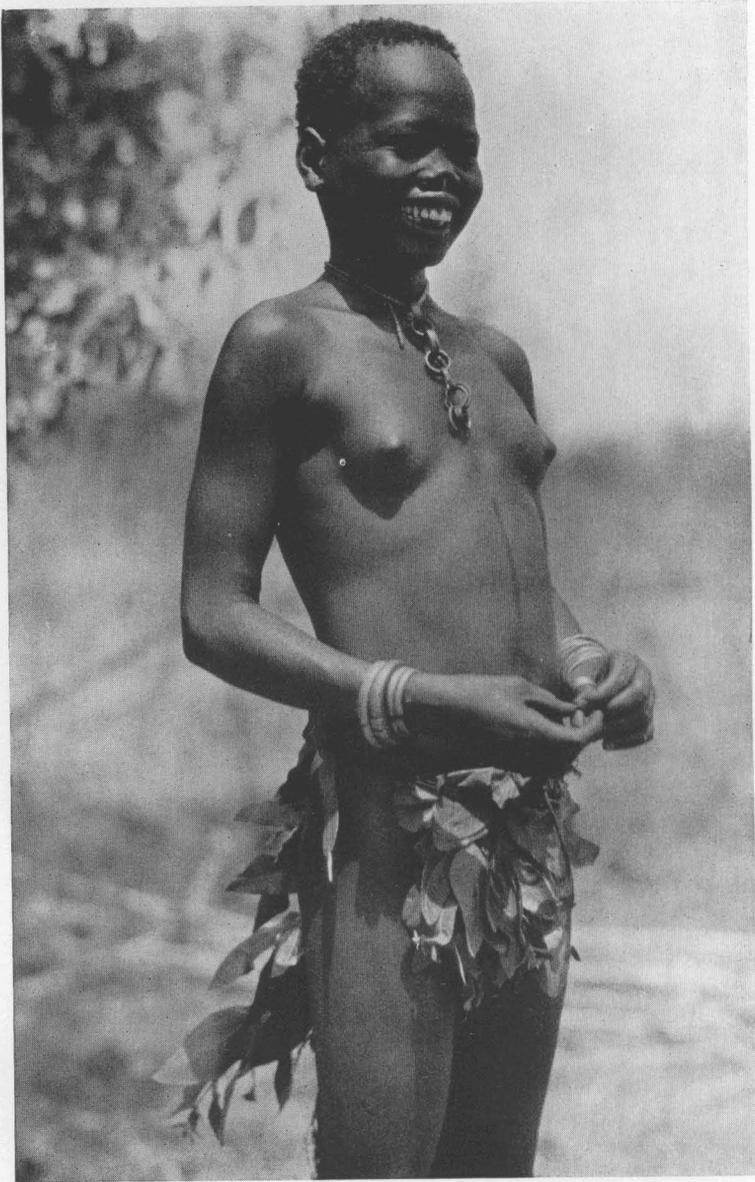
42. A break-down at 130° F. in the shade.



43. Building a hut on the top of a termite hill to observe game.



44. Eastern Jur bee-hive.



45. The Jur girls hang fresh leaves from the *hido* tree round themselves.

At many a sharp bend a stout tree bars the way. We often have to cross the queerest bridges whose substructures inspire very little confidence. Twice we have to drive through two feet of water, throwing up waves as though we were in a motor-boat. But the good old Ford is equal to everything. It climbs the steepest slopes as easily as it crosses sandy and muddy patches. Only we have to fill the radiator with water every hour. We pass through a village. The inhabitants are all Dinka. Women, dressed in nothing but an apron of goatskin, are fetching water. The well is deep and gourds hung on ropes of palm fibre serve as buckets (Fig. 27). At Lau, the largest village through which our way leads us, we see the natives gathered under the great "holy" trees, much as the villagers in Germany met under the limes. The Sheikh is holding court. He alone is dressed in khaki trousers and shirt, and a strange figure he cuts sitting there on his folding-chair of antelope skin. The parties sit on the ground before him, encircled by a crowd of inquisitive people. The debate is extremely lively and the onlookers also butt in. Unfortunately we cannot find out what it is all about, as we must go on. Several caravans of porters come towards us. The men are from the south. From their nut-brown colour and compact build it is evident that they belong to other tribes than the Nilotic negroes. Late in the evening we arrive at Rumbek, from which the habitat of the giant elands is said to be easily reached on foot.

We set off very early next morning. The police officer has given us a guide, named Makoj, of the Jur tribe, because we shall come to the country of the Eastern Jur. Armed with quiver, bow and arrow, he presents a very different picture from the spear-bearing Dinka. He only speaks a poor Arabic, which makes it pretty difficult for us to understand each other. Soon after the start he wants me at all costs to drive the car between two trees, where I should infallibly have stuck. At first the road is quite good and takes us through magnificent parkland with ancient trees overgrown

by rampant climbing plants. Then the steppe begins and finally the road dwindles away. This means jogging on carefully through the bush. Strange termite hills cover the plain in great numbers (Fig. 30). They bear a striking resemblance to mushrooms but are as hard as stone. Remarkable tubes are hanging high up in a large tree (Fig. 44). They are beehives belonging to the Jur, who probably have a village near. They keep bees in rather a special manner. These tubes are about two yards long and have threefold plaited walls. The hollow is divided by a partition wall, so that two swarms find a home in each tube. The hives are stopped with clay. The Jur tie them at random in the tops of old trees and they are soon occupied by one of the numerous wild swarms. For two or three years they are left in peace till the hive is well filled with honey. Then one evening a smoky fire is lighted and the hive taken off the tree. The smoke is led through the open tube so that the bees suffocate. The honey is collected in earthenware pots and forms an important article of food for the natives.

At last, after a drive of four and a half hours, we arrive at our destination, some old rest-houses. While we are stowing our baggage away in one of them the other collapses with a loud crash. The first one also shows serious cracks in the beams. These must be supported before my cameras can be brought in. Meanwhile the Sheikh, Nekor Djok, calls on us. As a symbol of his rank he wears an old sun helmet with a tuft of feathers. Very obligingly he gets an old woman to bring us water and wood and promises us guides for the following day.

Half an hour before dawn they actually appear, two of them, Galo and Amot. They have left their bows and arrows at home and instead each of them carries the inevitable spear on his shoulder. Galo's hair is done up in horns and he looks like a regular Mephistopheles. I load one of them with the camera and water and the other with the lenses and guns. We set out at the rapid pace of the natives. After

about two hours we reach the spot where the elands like to graze. They often drink only once in four days and they frequently change their watering-place. Now is the most unfavourable time, because everything is dry. At three little pools which are far apart the natives' cattle drink, the men bathe, the women draw the brownish-yellow water that smells of ammonia for drinking, and at night the elands come there. For about an hour we roam through the bush in all directions before we hit upon the tracks of two animals. Unfortunately they are two days old. Half-eaten leaves are lying about. Suddenly we light on the fresh tracks of a herd of about seven which have crossed the old marks. The guides now forge ahead. Bent forward, with glistening eyes, they follow the trail like hounds. From time to time they communicate by a click of the tongue or one of them points with his spear, then on they go. After three hundred yards the tracks show that the animals have taken flight. They had been standing under the wind browsing. Everywhere broken branches, as thick as an arm, lie scattered about, while the juicy young grass is untouched. They had observed our coming and fled. We follow without a word. But whereas other game turns as soon as possible into the wind, the elands always escape with it. That makes it impossible to come near them and I am already losing hope of sighting them, when all at once the footprints begin to turn against the wind in a wide curve. Till now they have been close together but they separate; the gallop has changed to a walk. It is not easy to stick to the marks, leading as they do through rocky country and high grass, and I have every reason to admire my guides. Though I have practised the following of tracks from my childhood and can hold my own with our European mountain hunters, here I am soon compelled to confess myself beaten. On we go through thick and thin, and it is only occasionally that a faint mark on the dry, stony soil shows us that the animals are still ahead of us. Hour after hour passes. The sun has slowly risen. It beats down

on us, but the elands have not stopped yet. The nature of the country is all against us. The wood never gives us a view of more than eighty steps. The hard ground carries the sound of our feet many hundred yards around. Large dry leaves crackle under our tread. Anyone who has stalked chamois in Europe on frozen ground and can imagine crackling foliage added to the trouble will be able to picture our situation. Suddenly the shikari start and for one moment I catch a vague glimpse in the bush of our longed-for quarry. Then on again for hour upon hour. My clothes are sticking to my skin. Five times I have caught sight of the animals. A herd of buffaloes cross our path; later an old, morose solitary bobs up, but he is just as little interesting to me as the horse antelopes and tiang that we met earlier. It is 1 p.m. The hunt has lasted from six till now without a pause and always at the same pace. We have to rest. But there is no peace for us in the shade of a tree, for little flying bugs creep into nose, eyes and ears, bee-like pests with stings make their way into sleeves and trouser legs. Every second is torture, so we have no choice but to go on without rest or repose. Again hour after hour. Eventually about four o'clock we have to give it up. In the course of the day the animals have described a large half-circle and we are not far from our camp. We must in any case make haste if we are to reach the rest-house in daylight at all. We turn at right angles and make for the camp. We have walked for half an hour when, lo and behold! there are the elands before us! They too had turned aside. The herd is moving slowly. As the wood is here a little less dense, I run for all I am worth to cut them off. It is no use. These giants, though they weigh up to a ton, are good runners. With a racing pulse and thumping heart I realise that all my efforts to get nearer are in vain. I am too far away to photograph them. I hurry to a tree to rest my rifle. A running shot is out of the question. A narrow gap some five yards wide affords me a view. They will have to pass it. My aim is as steady as if I were at a

shooting range. A few seconds elapse, then the first animal appears. It is impossible to distinguish a bull from a cow. Shoot a milking cow? No. I had rather try again tomorrow.

Again early in the morning they fetch me to go to the grazing place. At the first trees the guides arrange a "charm." They pick leaves and branches and make a bunch of them. One of them holds my gun, while the other waves the bunch to and fro over it and says several sentences in his soft, guttural language. The leaves are laid on the path, the magician treads with his right foot on them and then the others follow his example.

At last we find droppings from to-day; they look like green olives, hardly bigger. But hour after hour goes by without our being able to get near the animals. The tracks lead eventually into thick scrub. There is a noise and fifty yards before us the giants stand up. Without a word we drop to the ground. I, clad only in helmet, bathing drawers and sandals, lie down on an ant-hill whose inhabitants pitch into me valiantly. There can be no thought of moving. The elands are undecided whether there is danger. Straight in front of me stands an old cow looking towards us. The rest are hidden by the bushes. Crawling like a snake I change my place to get a view of the others. It is an unforgettable experience to watch this rare and timid creature at fifty yards. I can make out four of them with two calves. The first cow is apparently on guard. While the others stretch and scratch themselves at their ease, she stands motionless at her post; only the long ears and the tail twitch to drive away the flies. The animals begin slowly to graze. I am so near that I can distinguish every hair through my field glasses. Now and again they tear off bunches of leaves. One of them is rubbing its zebu-like hump against a tree and breaks off a branch as thick as one's arm. It eats a few leaves and lets the rest lie on the ground. I observe them closely, but there is not a bull among them. One of the

calves pushes up against its mother and sucks. Sometimes a cow utters a deep sound and its companions answer as if to express their opinions too. The mane and the long hair between the spiral horns flutter in the wind. The grey-brown hide with its white stripes has a silvery sheen in the sunlight, and as they stand there together, browsing and chewing the cud, these innocent giants are a picture of rare contentment. There is no sign of that nervous tenseness that strikes one in other animals. For an instant the wind drops, then there is a breath from behind me. At once all the elands stand as though transfixed; for a second they sniff, then turn and thunder away in a cloud of dust.

We march back for hours on end through dry grass four yards high. Nothing more wearisome can be imagined than this stumbling on without a view, while the scorching sun takes one's breath away. Dizzily I stagger back into the village.

There are great goings-on here. I have ordered a hundred quarts of *merissa* for the next day and there is going to be dancing. Everybody is singing and chattering and gossiping. I manage to take some photos of the shy women. Their lips are deformed. The upper lip is pierced and a disc inserted so that the mouth takes on the shape of a duck's beak. Businesslike Europeans have turned this to account and deliver lip-plates of glass to the Jur. I am asked if I have not brought any from Shambe, where they have only recently appeared for sale. Beautiful they are not with this ornament and it is obvious that kissing is a custom unknown to the negroes. But the women are very clean and perform their toilet every day with great care. Round their hips they wear a strip of leather tanned like chamois with a tail hanging down behind and a similar strip drawn between the legs. They also hang fresh green leaves from the *hido* tree in front and behind (Fig. 45). Every morning the woman goes to the wood to fetch herself a new "dress" and the old one is thrown away. Well-formed rings of copper and brass

which, in contra-distinction to other tribes, are not closed adorn their arms. The hairs of their head are carefully plucked out one by one. When a boy or girl attains the age of four or five, the four lower incisors are knocked out—a custom which the Eastern Jur have probably acquired from the Nilotic negroes. The men, well-built and handsome, try to improve their looks by remarkable hair-dress. All of the men wear a short apron and they never go naked like their neighbours. The apron is often of European stuff, but the ancient costume may still be seen. The genitals are enclosed in a cod-piece of chamois leather, while a short apron of buckskin with the feet and hoofs on it hangs round the middle, back and front. The ears of both sexes are pierced and adorned with rings of brass and copper. It is seldom that one sees strings of coloured beads—a sign that so far very few European goods have been dumped here. The men carry beautiful knives in their belts, but they have mostly been imported from the north and are the work of the Niam-Niam. Particularly small, delicate ones, used for tattooing, come from Meridi. Both sexes are marked, like the Dinka and Nuer, with tribal badges, namely, deep horizontal lines running across the forehead and far into the hair. The Jur assert that they sprinkle nothing whatever in the cuts, as the Sudanese, for example, do; the cuts are simply unusually deep. The men have their own style of greeting. They raise the right hand to the left side of the forehead and withdraw it downwards while they scrape the ground with the right foot like a fowl. The Eastern Jur seem to mingle freely with their neighbours: several Dinka women who have married Jur men confirm this impression. It is a mystery to me how such poor devils as the Jur, who own no cattle and very few goats, can buy themselves Dinka wives, but it seems to be a fact. The long-legged, handsome, very thin figures are unmistakable among the small, tubby Jur women (Figs. 38 and 39). Many women still wear the goatskin Dinka apron (Fig. 37). Both sexes are tattooed, but often on one side

only and not nearly so carefully as the Bari, who have punctiliously accurate, symmetrical figures and drawings cut into the skin.

The settlements hardly deserve the name of villages; the dwellings lie scattered apart and are frequently built on a wooden platform in the manner of our pile-houses. Machulka and I attempt to find out more about the tribe from the Sheikh and some old men. In particular we ask why they do not build nearer together. "That would be the last straw," says the Sheikh; "our women would then be at each other's hair the whole blessed day." I could not discover if the women here are specially pugnacious by nature, but perhaps the duck's beak is meant to be evidence of it.

A remarkable scene takes place not far from us. A mother has, by means of vigorous massage, induced her little one to pass motion and is now catching the excrement in large green leaves, which have to be changed several times on account of the quantity produced.

We learn some interesting facts about marriage among the Eastern Jur. Young men and girls get to know each other before marriage. If their acquaintance has demonstrably gone too far, the man has to pay twenty *melota* as a fine. If there are further consequences it costs sixty *melota* (an iron instrument for working the soil) and two goats. The exact punishment is fixed by the Sheikh, who fills the office of judge, in consultation with the council of elders. In spite of the punishments the young people's morals are not too certain. If the lovers decide to marry, the bridegroom's most eminent relatives visit the bride's people. If the girl is not willing, then she is not, as among the Shilluk, for instance, compelled, however rich the suitor may be. Up to a hundred *melota*, ten goats, a hundred arrows and twenty spears may be demanded as the bride-price for a young and pretty girl, not to mention the brass which the bridegroom must raise for the wedding present. If the woman is old and ugly, the price drops to as little as six *melota*. The Sheikh

actually asserts that cows are also sometimes paid. But as it is impossible on account of certain flies to keep any domestic animals in the neighbourhood besides the goats, the Jur, according to him, have sent their cattle to graze with the Dinka cows. This sounds so improbable that one can only suppose he was talking big.

As soon as the bride-price is paid, the girl joins the man and the thing is finished. He has no obligation to make good any animal that dies, as is the case with the Shilluk. The wedding day is festively celebrated. A bull is bought from the Dinka and slaughtered along with two goats. That the guests are not stinted in *merissa* goes without saying. And there is naturally some free fighting. If the bridegroom has a *tukul* ready, the young woman stays with him; otherwise she returns to her parents until the man has finished building one. Should a woman have no children, it is no ground of divorce as it is among most negro tribes. The Shilluk, for example, drives the woman with abuse and curses back to her parents once the medicine-man has "tested" whether the blame for her barrenness does not rest with her husband. When the young wife is pregnant, the relatives help her in the house until four weeks after the birth. A midwife delivers her. The married couple abstain from sexual intercourse for some time before the happy event and are not allowed to resume cohabitation till the child is able to speak. That means two years as a rule. A man who is so lucky as to possess several wives lives a week with each in turn in her own *tukul*.

Divorce is not uncommon and there are plenty of grounds. A conclusive ground is, of course, adultery; but "incompatibility of temperament" suffices. After a divorce the woman, whether guilty or innocent, returns to her family. If the wife is the guilty party the man claims the bride-price back. Supposing her relatives cannot raise it, then in the case of subsequent marriage they must hand over the bride-price paid by the new suitor to the former husband. Children in all circumstances remain with the father.

When a Jur is ill, no medicine is used to cure him, so the Sheikh maintains. The only remedy is hot water and "diet," which consists of a thin gruel of durra. If the patient dies, he is immediately buried. A man killed fighting, whether against animals or other men, is buried in a sitting posture with his hands before his face. A man who dies in his bed is buried lying down, as are also children. Once the grave is closed, the women bewail the dead man for four days, while the men try to hunt down a head of game. The game and two goats are roasted and the relatives indulge in a wake with plenty of *merissa*. The eldest brother is the heir, and only failing him the first-born son. The widow may not marry again for two years. During this period she is supported by the members of both families. Then she may choose whether she will go to some near relative of her husband, who in this case has no bride-price to pay, or will belong to another. The dead man's belongings are heaped up on his grave. We pass a child's grave. A cradle and the child's sleeping mat are tied to a peg and a ball is also lying there composed of body-hair from the nearest relatives. The grave is fenced with canna and will be tended until the termites have eaten it all up. Then it will be forgotten together with the little mortal whom it concealed.

The Eastern Jur, like many poor negro tribes, have only one proper meal in the day, and that is in the evening. But everyone gobbles up whatever comes his way. Almost anything that crawls or flies is eaten: insects, creeping things and rats count as dainties.

We ask Galo, the Sheikh, how many children he has. Only five, is the answer. "Why so few?" we ask with sympathy. "I am still young and shall have more. I have just taken a third young wife," he tells us. "How many do you want?" we ask indiscreetly. He puts the fingers of his right hand together and smacks the palm of his left. "Lots and lots and lots!" he cries enthusiastically. As he is in such a good humour, we hazard a little advance and inquire into his

religious conceptions. He becomes silent and gives the same answer that I have so often heard among negro tribes. "I know nothing about it. We have no religion. You should have known my father. He was old and knew everything and could have told you exactly, but unfortunately he is dead."

During the night I am suddenly awakened. The word *hariga* sends me flying out of bed. The rest-house is surrounded by dry grass and we had already seen a grass fire in the distance that afternoon, though in the soft wind it was only spreading slowly. Now we are faced by a sea of flames. The fire is near and we hear the crackling of the tall flames. The whole neighbourhood is lit up and painted purple. In the background is a dark wood which only seems to be lit up at a few places. Everywhere little whirlwinds are sweeping tufts of burning grass into the air and fresh flames are breaking out fifty or sixty yards further on. We have our hands full to put out these flying torches. They are our sole but not inconsiderable danger, since we had cleared our immediate surroundings of grass, for which we are now very thankful. It is a long time, however, before the unspeakably beautiful spectacle is at an end.

The dance is to take place in the morning and I hope to photograph it by sunlight. In the early hours it is rather cold and a large fire has been lighted in the open place. Melanj, an eight-year-old boy, armed like a grown-up with bow and arrow, has caught a big brown rat, roasts it at the blaze and at once eats it with obvious enjoyment. The first guests arrive towards ten. They have brought drums and a large carved trumpet which has been acquired from the Niam-Niam, their cannibal neighbours. The men have shaved their heads, all but their remarkable coiffure, and the women appear in fresh leaf ornaments. Some Dinka have also joined them. Women carry great jugs of *merissa* about and gradually the musicians get to work. The booming of the big drums can be heard afar and brings crowds of tardy

guests hurrying in from all sides, till the whole place is swarming with men, women and children. First of all some beautiful Dinka dances are performed, in which guests belonging to that tribe take part (Fig. 35). The orchestra consists of one big drum, one small one and a multitude of rattles. The orchestra is then doubled and the Jur dances begin with a strict and everchanging rhythm. One is particularly striking: the women, drawn up in a row, turn their backs to the guest of honour (in this instance myself) and, in time with the syncopated music, execute violent bouncing movements with their hind-quarters.

Everybody gives vent to his high spirits, the *merissa* has had its effect and the good-humour of the women expresses itself in squeaks that remind one of piglets. The men add their voices and all of a sudden the whole mob encircle me, to the great danger of my cinema camera. They whirl round and round with ear-splitting din so that I can neither see nor hear a thing, until the good Sheikh rescues me. I try to film, but the difficulties are great. The people will not dance in the sun, and when at last I have prevailed upon them, a hideous old witch, as dry as a stick, insists on jumping about the whole time in front of the camera. I have to run around with the heavy apparatus in the heat and catch what I can. And it is precisely these dances that are so unusually interesting! The great tribes of the Shilluk or Dinka perform group dances in which the individual is absorbed in the whole. Here, on the other hand, each one dances the artistic figures by himself (Fig. 34). Whether they are the women painted red with ochre or the men, each has his individual dance motive.

During a pause the men practise their archery. The opportunity is favourable for loosening their tongues a little more. I had hitherto supposed that the arrows were poisoned with a kind of curare and had to be kept very carefully in cotton wool when not in use. The men here tell me that they use a poison composed of various plant juices.

The milky sap of euphorbias plays a part in it. The Sheikh himself has turned talkative and shows that not only his father "knew everything," but that he too knows pretty well about religious matters. He tells me that the Jur worship a Higher Being called "Mataro," and that this god manifests himself in two forms, a good one, "Lebadch," and a bad one, "Nibadch." He lives at a certain place in the desert. A few old men and women know the place and mediate between the god and men. The knowledge of his abode seems to be hereditary. If very weighty juridical decisions are to be taken or if the rain stays away, an old man is induced by means of presents to ask the god for advice. He takes a goat and *merissa* and sacrifices them in the desert. The poor Jur thereby offer the most valuable of their possessions. How the sacrifice is performed and at what moment the deity appears, the Sheikh does not know. He appears to the man who has conjured him up in one of his two forms. If the priest transmits disastrous commands, he says on his return, "Nibadch spoke," otherwise he reveals the will of "Lebadch." The Sheikh avers that the Jur have no sorcerers, every member of the tribe knows how to "do magic" himself. Actually all sorts of charms hang in every courtyard, mostly on a withered tree. They comprise sticks, gourds smeared with fat, pieces of rope, bass fibre, bits of bone and the like. The withered tree is called *makao* and is carefully protected. During the rainy season it is set up in the hut for the objects to get coloured by smoke. If a man wishes to injure an enemy he fills an earthenware bowl with water, millet and the seeds of certain magic plants and boils them over the fire. The enemy now appears to him. Whatever he commands the apparition to do, takes place promptly. If he demands that his enemy's goats shall die, or the death of the man himself, it happens. There is another form of spell, but it is not without danger. The spell-maker must go with a pot of *merissa* to his enemy's *tukul* while he is asleep, quietly open the mat that covers the entrance and stand with his back towards the interior in the

doorway. He must then fill his mouth with beer, bend forwards and spit it out between his legs into the enemy's hut. Whatever he wishes during this proceeding will be realised. The entrance must then be carefully closed again with the mat. If his enemy catches him at it, he must pay a fine. "The fine is very heavy, enough to buy a pretty girl," the Sheikh remarks.

The lively exercise of dancing makes one hungry and the midday heat thirsty, so there is a pause and everybody falls upon the steaming dishes. Young mothers suckle their children, after unpacking them from bags made of gazelle skin. One has gripped her baby's stomach with her fist and is rubbing it this way and that with all her might, while the child yells as though it were on a roasting-spit. In surprise I ask the reason for this treatment and learn that the mother's milk is bad and the child consequently suffering from constipation. It is being "massaged." I am sure that if it survives this treatment it will be healthy.

The car is started up and I drive in a circle round the festal assembly. As most of them have never seen a car, they are afraid, but the next moment the whole crowd surge in front of me bawling, laughing, screaming, and only when the car is back at its place, without having run over any of the guests, does the natives' delight gradually die down.

Late in the afternoon the guests begin to take their leave and then trouble breaks out. The Sheikh tries to pacify them, but is soon involved in the scuffle himself, for somebody has been rude to Matalo, his favourite wife. The disputants are with difficulty parted. Then one of them dashes off to fetch his weapons. I arrange that three men shall waylay him and tie him up till he has slept off his drunkenness.

The next few days I have reserved for photographing family life among the Eastern Jur. With my camera I set out to visit separate establishments. The characteristic style of building is most striking. A high wooden platform carries the hut, which is carefully plaited out of straw and branches.

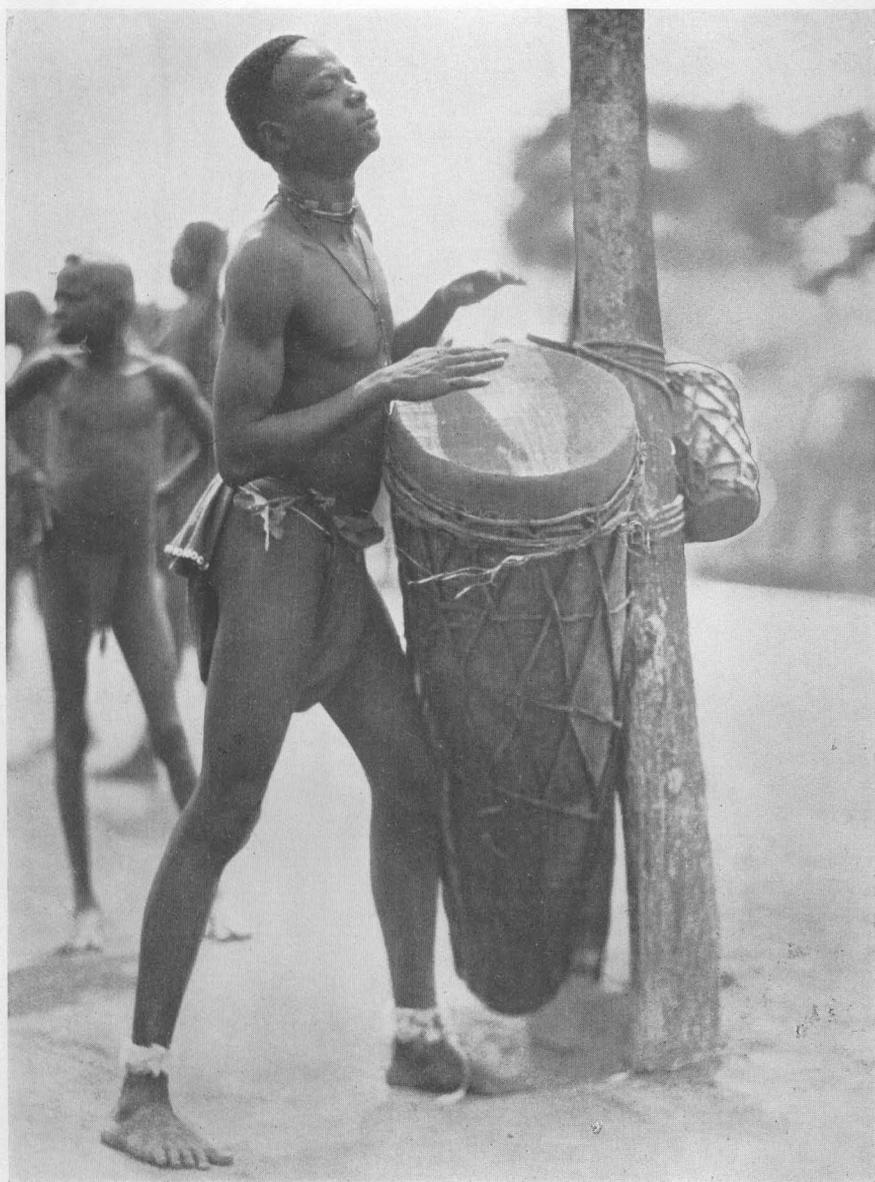
The entrance looks as if it were cemented with concrete and is closed with a plaited door (Fig. 40). Every grown-up person has his own *tukul*. There are four huts for my host's four wives and each lives in one with her children. The walls of the dwelling *tukul* are covered with clay, those of the provision stores woven out of canna. There is also a *tukul* on the level of the ground where the millstone for grinding millet is kept and the *merissa* is brewed. The drink is made ready in another yard and every guest may drink as much as he likes. In the middle of the yard a high, two-storied *tukul* is built over an eternal fire. Four smoothed pieces of wood stand out on the peak of the roof facing the four points of the compass. The floor of the first story is woven out of canna; here the youths spend the evening telling stories, while the smoke from the fire keeps insects away. Several spotted dogs, something like greyhounds with broad foreheads, inhabit the courtyard. Practically every house has to be rebuilt every three years, because that period suffices for the termites to finish their work of destruction. A quantity of unthreshed cobs of durra hang in the yard—the best way to preserve the corn free of insects. Not everybody among the Jur is as wealthy as our host. One meets some families who only have two huts. The smith, for example, has set up his miserable forge under a simple straw roof. The goats are also housed in a *tukul* level with the earth and only the numerous fowls climb up a ladder to their abode like human beings. But they have to scrounge for themselves. In the court there are three graves, one of them just underneath the owner's sleeping *tukul*, the others alongside. One is provided with a plaited fence and another decorated with buffalo horns. The Jur tells us proudly that he killed the mighty beast himself, armed merely with a spear.

Everything is meticulously clean. The women are busy at all kinds of housework. Two are fetching water in large round earthenware pots, another is preparing the food. The proprietor is sitting in front of the reception *tukul*, which is

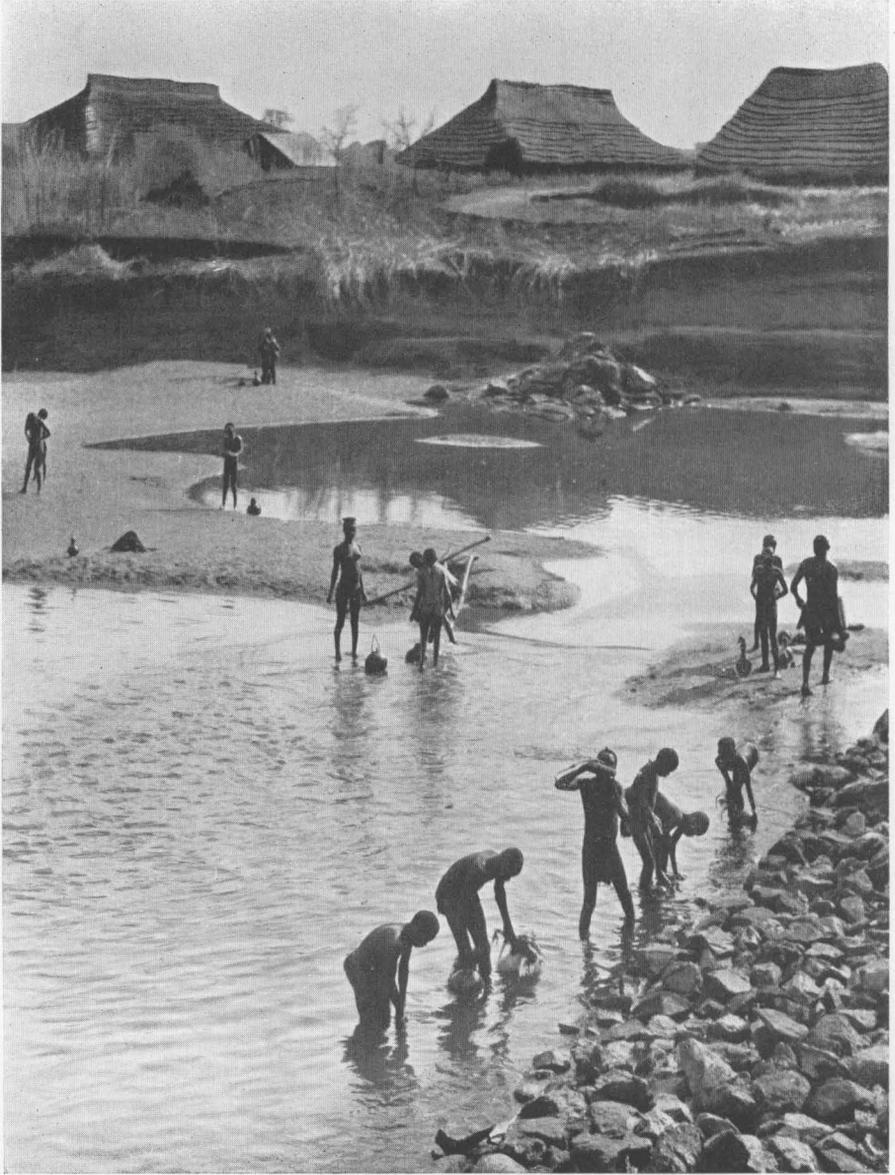
divided into two rooms and is especially well-built, and offers us honey. I get someone to show me how the Jur light fire. They use two sticks about a yard long. In one are several semicircular holes in which a little sand is sprinkled; the other stick is fitted in and twirled. As soon as the glowing wood dust begins to smoke it is shaken on to a piece of hide and there a flame is produced with the help of dry grass. A laborious operation.

There is little cattle but a great deal of agriculture. The Eastern Jur cultivate several sorts of durra, one of which grows to ten yards high and forms whole thickets. Millet is ground and eaten as a porridge with simsin oil and fat. Meat is always reserved for festal occasions, although even in this tribe there are people well enough off to afford *kisra* (millet cake with a meat sauce) like the Arabs. Paprika is the principal seasoning, while the place of salt is taken by certain kinds of wood ashes thoroughly cleansed.

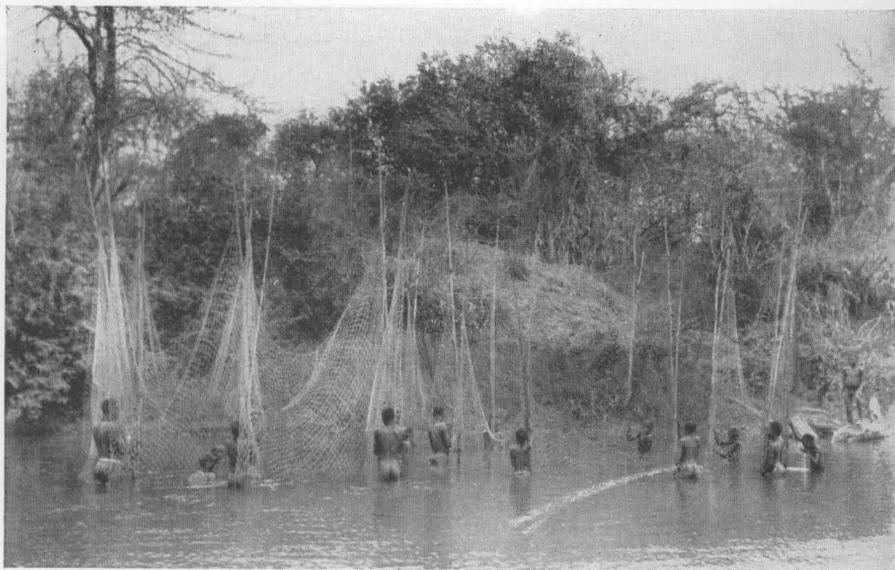
I have the greatest difficulty when I try to film the women when they are dressing. As I have already mentioned, the women wear as apron a bundle of green leaves. The Sheikh, to whom I explain my wish, is not willing to fulfil it because his women could not possibly dress and undress before a stranger. So I go to the next establishment. The owner expresses himself as quite willing, only his women are just busy with something else. Although I have seen two in a hut, I pretend to believe him and hope that the women will be inquisitive enough to appear in time. My supposition proves correct. I have scarcely turned round when the man rushes up to the huts and scolds. I ask innocently what is the matter and he tells me he has just rebuked the children. I make myself at home, put the cameras in the shade of a tree and start a long conversation with him. He answers my questions with a torrent of words, in which two Arab expressions are always followed by ten in the Jur language, but I nod my head as though I understood. It is not long



46. Moru drumming. The skin drum is vigorously beaten with both hands.



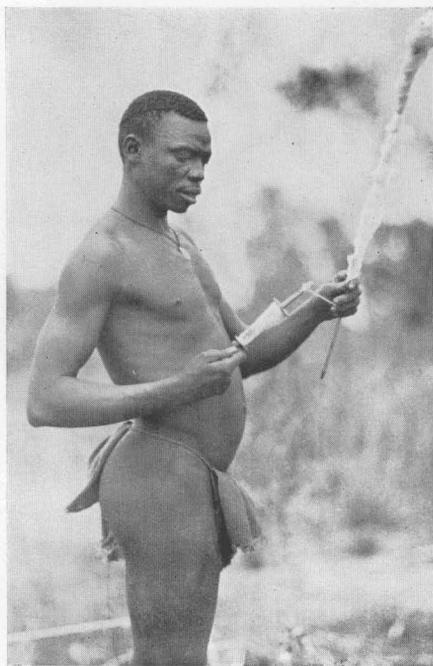
47. View into the river valley from the bridge near Amadi.



48. The Moru surround the fish with nets, then duck into the water after them and fetch them out on an iron hook, a kind of gaff.



49. The Moru catch antelopes with strong nets into which they drive them, and when they are entangled they kill them with spears.



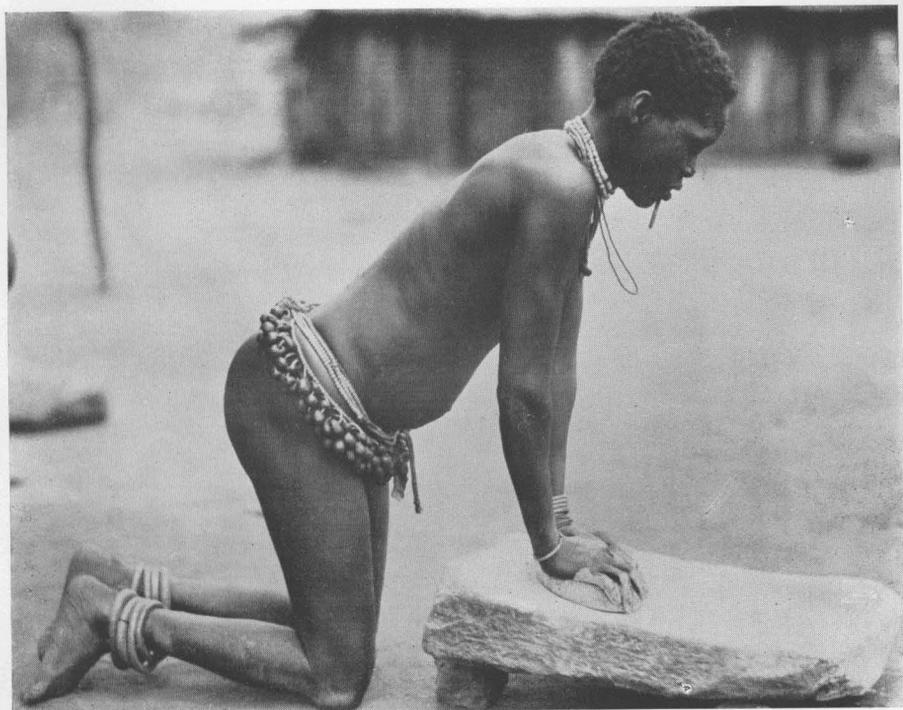
50. Among the Moru cotton-spinning is men's work.



51. Moru woman, smeared with ochre and powdered with white seed for the feast.



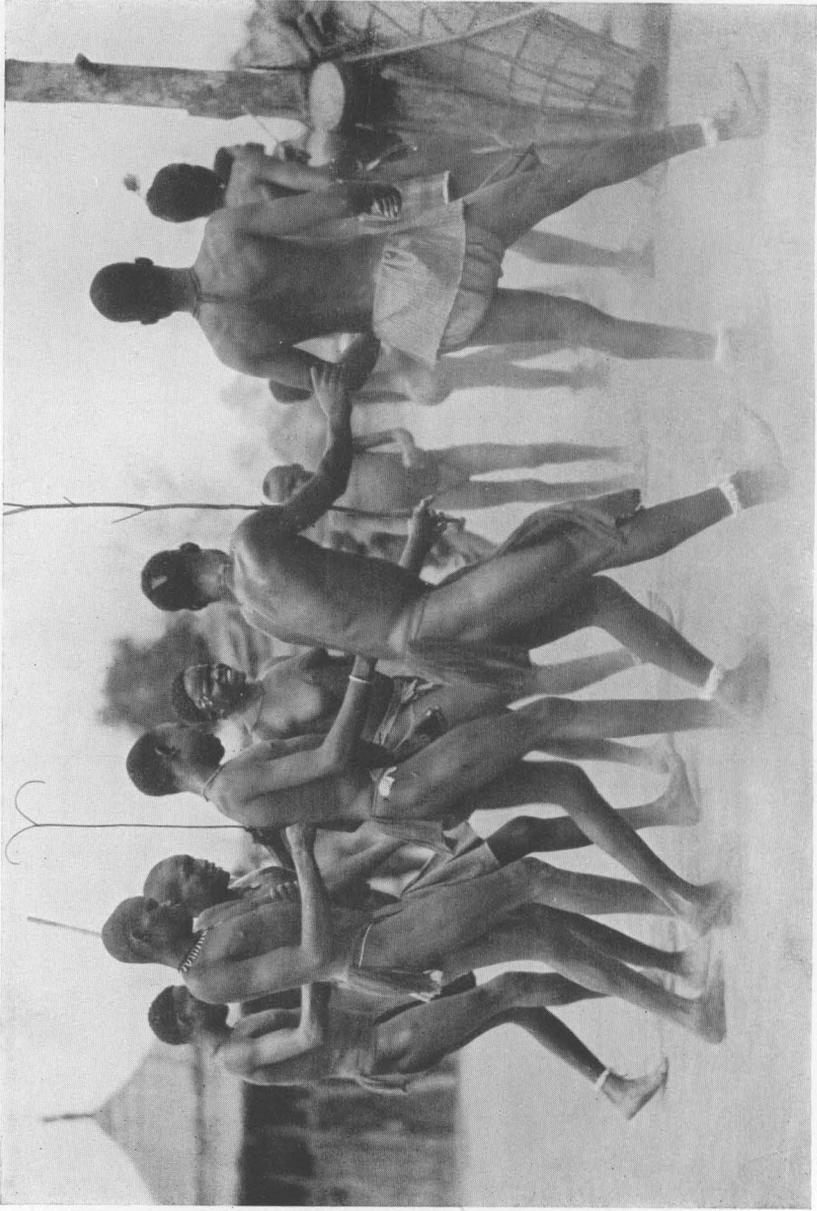
52. Moru storehouse with a chief's grave, in the form of a stone pyramid with buffalo horns on the top.



53. Moru woman grinding millet.



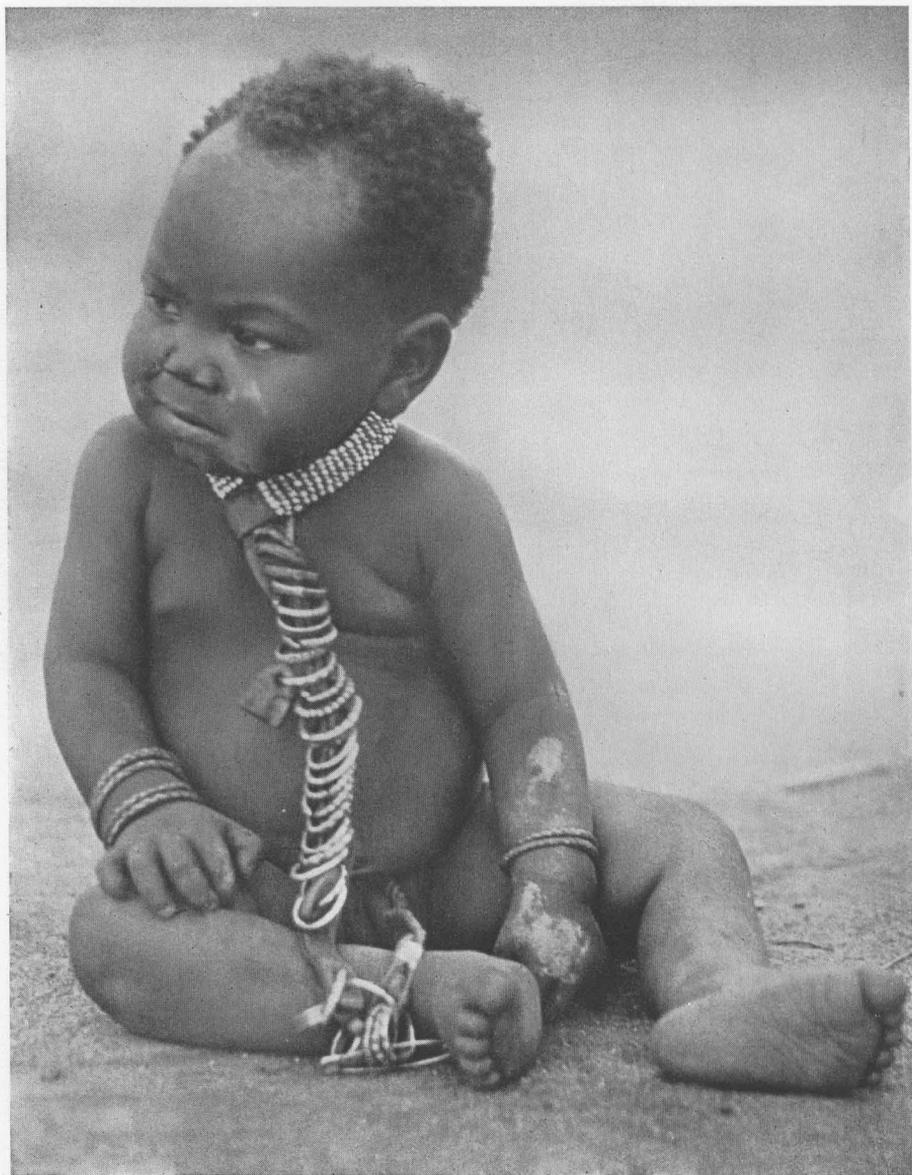
54. Moru women making pots. They work without a potter's wheel.



55. Moru dance. To the beat of a skin-drum orchestra each girl leads a group of men who dance round her.



56. African game that takes the place of chess and draughts.



57. Moru child of a wealthy family with precious neck ornaments made of heavy wrought rings of copper and iron.

before two women appear, Mansa and Atiank, bringing water-pots on their heads from the khor. I now thank the man for his kind permission to film the women and go with them to the nearest tree. The photo is quickly taken. The man's face looks as if he had bitten into a sour lemon, but he decides to make the best of a bad job and accompanies me as far as the next group of dwellings.

A judicial sitting is in progress. The Sheikh, who is at the same time judge, has taken his place under a tree with a man and a woman at ten yards' distance under another. The case is one of adultery. The parties cover each other with abuse. The Sheikh lets them get it off their chests and then begins to examine them. A very involved affair, he tells me later, that will take him a fortnight to disentangle.

A girl of about twelve steps out of one of the huts. We learn that she is due to be married soon. I ask the father what price he is demanding. He answers, "A hundred *melota*, eight goats and two hundred arrows." I am astonished that it is so high and observe that it is a heavy burden for the bridegroom to bear. "He can easily bear it," the father explains proudly and goes on to expatiate on the girl's merits. I have nothing against it. I agree with all he says and as a reward am allowed to photograph the beauty.

Next morning we go through the wood. The dew glistens like pearls on the evergreen leaves (Fig. 31). In the middle of the wood we come to an unusually well-adorned grave under an ancient tree. I ask Galo if he knows who is buried here. "Naturally," he answers, "here lies my father." Astonished, I ask why he buried him in the middle of the wood instead of beside his *tukul*. "My father was a famous man and when he died I buried him in the wood. Everybody should know his grave, for while he lived he was as mighty as the tree under which he lies."

At noon we go back to Shambe by way of Rumbek and I discover that I have been staying with a tribe that had

remained unknown to students till that day. Although the Eastern Jur, unlike the other Jur, do not belong to the Nilotes, I have called them Jur because that is the name they themselves use. I have added the epithet “ Eastern ” to emphasise the distinction between them and the already familiar Nilotic Jur.